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ABSTRACT

As part of a larger exploration of the role of community colleges in bringing the poor, working class, and ethnic minorities into higher education, this study looked at how students and institutional cultures at four urban community colleges interacted to achieve unusually high transfer rates to four-year colleges and universities. In the 1994-95 academic year the study examined the Community College of Philadelphia (Pennsylvania), Wilbur Wright College in Chicago (Illinois), Palo Alto College in San Antonio (Texas), and Seattle Central Community College in Washington. Ethnographic researchers gathered 450 data elements from interviews with and observation of students, faculty, staff and administrators; attendance at institution-wide events; and collection of historical and archival documents. Though a single, consistent pattern of interaction between institutional and student cultures did not emerge from the analysis and individual portraits of the colleges revealed distinctly different institutions, each had an institutional culture that seemed to mesh with the unique attitudes, needs, and aspirations of their student bodies. The analysis also suggests that the ways this confluence occurred is situation specific. Whether students willingly adapt to the institutional culture or the culture adapts to the student, the ability of either culture to be adaptive appeared to be a key ingredient in the culture of these colleges. Includes a matrix comparing the four institutions. (Contains 47 references.) (JB)

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Negotiating Class and Cultural Boundaries: Toward an Expanded Definition of the Transfer Process

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Negotiating Class and Cultural Boundaries:
Toward an Expanded Definition of the Transfer Process

Introduction

Community colleges can potentially play a critical role in the process of upward mobility in American society. While higher education traditionally has been the realm of the white and middle class, over the past thirty years the poor, working class and ethnic/racial minorities have enjoyed increased access to postsecondary education, largely through the doors of community colleges. Indeed, in 1993, 56% of Hispanic students, 42% of African-American students, 52% of Native American students, and 41% of Asian students enrolled in postsecondary education attended community colleges; in contrast, 37% of White students enrolled in community colleges (Chronicle of Higher Education, 1995).

While approximately 40% of community college students enter these institutions explicitly intending to transfer (Dougherty, 1987), transfer rates from community to four-year colleges remain stubbornly low. Although rates vary significantly by college, on average only 23.5% of community college students transfer successfully. In the urban institutions in which working class and minority students tend to be concentrated, the rate is closer to 11% (Cohen, 1992). Indeed, the likelihood of attaining a baccalaureate degree diminishes significantly when students begin their postsecondary education at a community college rather than at a four-year institution, even when controlling for academic ability (Astin, 1985; Dougherty, 1987; Richardson and Bender, 1987). As a

result, educational equity and full participation in the political, cultural, and economic life of this country continues to evade students who seek access to these realms via the community college.

Yet some urban community colleges are exceptions to this pattern, in that their transfer rates are significantly higher than similar institutions. This paper is drawn from a larger research project entitled Cultures of Success: A Study of Community Colleges with High Transfer Rates. The project is a four-year ethnographic examination of multiple urban community colleges, each of which enrolls high numbers of working class and minority students and boasts a transfer rate that is significantly above the national norm for urban institutions. The larger purpose of the research project is to understand what, in the culture of these institutions, contributes to their relative success in transfer. The study is currently at its midpoint, and this paper is a first attempt to examine the ways in which each of four urban community colleges with high transfer rates addresses contextual factors which affect nontraditional students' experiences of college and influence their desire to continue their formal education.

Literature Review

Community Colleges and the Transfer Function

Although community colleges have historically served multiple purposes, traditionally, the transfer function has been foremost among them. Yet in recent years, the focus on vocational and two-year terminal career programs has increased, most often at the expense of the transfer function (Dougherty, 1987; Eaton, 1994). Bernstein (1986) and Karabel (1986) note that the number of transfer programs and the resources devoted

to them have actually declined in community colleges in recent years, and fewer advanced courses are offered for students who want to transfer.

Most studies of transfer utilize quantitative or historical methods to investigate the impact of formal organizational and/or state practices on the transfer function (e.g., Orfield and Paul, 1992; Richardson and Skinner, 1991; Dougherty, 1994; Donovan, 1987); other studies have provided descriptive statistics on transfer rates (Cohen, 1988, 1992). In short, the research conceptualizes transfer as a series of mechanistic steps, such as taking the correct sequence of courses, identifying a four-year institution and obtaining information regarding requirements, creating articulation agreements, etc.

This work, while important, ignores the inner workings of the community college and of the transfer process itself. The few ethnographic studies of the community college that do exist (Clark, 1960; London, 1978; Weis, 1985; Valadez, 1995) have led to major advances in understanding the culture of community colleges, but none focused specifically on transfer.

Defining Institutional Culture

The culture of an organization can be understood as a dialectical process that is formed through the common understandings that shape social interaction and in turn get reshaped through those same interactions. When defined in this way, culture "not only provides the parameters for our social interactions; it provides a framework for how we define ourselves in relation to others" (Rhoads and Valadez, forthcoming). This definition of culture borrows much from symbolic interactionist theory, which posits that social interaction is an interpretive process in which meaning is constructed in concert

with others, and is mediated by cultural norms or values (Blumer, 1969; Mead, 1934). The culture of a particular institution such as a community college, then, both frames human interaction, and is reframed as these interactions influence the institutional culture. This interactive, interpretivist framework is used here to enhance our understanding of the ways in which educational inequity is either reinforced or overcome within particular institutions.

Models of Educational Inequity and Social Mobility

Early models of educational inequity focused on the economic and cultural sources of inequity while ignoring the individual's conscious role in the shaping of his or her own fate (e.g., Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Bourdieu, 1973). More recently, a series of critical ethnographies have taken individual agency into account in a way that posits a more reflexive relationship between people and their circumstances. Research by resistance theorists such as Willis (1977), MacLeod (1987, 1995), Weis (1985), and Foley (1990) portray the development of oppositional cultures adopted by minorities and the poor and working class which serve to reinforce racial and social class inequities. Ogbu's work distinguishing voluntary minorities from involuntary minorities (1978, 1994) illustrates that, while voluntary minorities (e.g., recent immigrants) develop strategies to accept school norms and alternate their academic identity at school with a nonacademic identity among friends, involuntary minorities such as African-Americans and Latinos often resist success in schooling because they associate it with assimilation into the dominant group. As Mehan et al (1994) summarize, "In short, poor black and Latino students are said to have an ideology and a course of action that directly challenges conventional American

wisdom about the relationship between academic performance and occupational success...[Thus], the ideology and practice of resistance contribute to the lowly position of blacks and Latinos in the occupational structure, according to "resistance" theorists, because working-class students refuse to develop the skills, the attitudes, the manners, and the speech that are necessary for the achievement of success in capitalist societies" (p.96).

The concept of "border crossing" is used often by resistance and other critical theorists to describe the difficulties inherent in moving between two cultures that are seen by those inhabiting one or both worlds as essentially unequal (Delgado-Gaitan and Trueba, 1991; Giroux, 1993). Such is often the case, for example, for poor African-Americans who enter the college environment, since most colleges do not value the language, behavior or beliefs of this subgroup. As Phelan, Davidson and Yu (1993) point out, "when borders are present, movement and adaptation are frequently difficult because the knowledge and skills in one world are more highly valued and esteemed than those in another" (p. 53). In contrast, the term "boundary crossing" is used to denote movement between two cultures in which the sociocultural components of each world are accorded equal status and legitimacy. Movement between these two worlds is less traumatic, as it does not require an abdication or repudiation of a prior identity or "home world."

Social integrationist theorists are in direct opposition to resistance theorists because they conceptualize movement between two different and inherently unequal worlds as a healthy and positive adjustment that is both appropriate and necessary for success in

college. For example, Tinto's model of college student attrition utilizes Durkhiemian ideas of anomie and anthropological notions of rites of passage to suggest that students must be academically and socially integrated into the college setting in order to persist (Tinto, 1975, 1987). Yet this model assumes that institutional values and attitudes are uniform, and that the individual is responsible for adapting to the college setting. Such assumptions ignore the psychological and social cost of such adjustments for some students, and gloss over the multiplicity of identities and experiences of college students. As Tierney states, "a model of integration that never questions who is to be integrated and how it is to be done assumes an individualist stance of human nature and rejects differences based on categories such as class, race, and gender" (1992, p. 607).

However, both resistance theorists and social integrationists agree on two critical points: (1) in today's colleges and universities, poor, working class and minority students are being asked to separate from their socioeconomic and racial cultures and adapt to the dominant (i.e., white and middle class) culture of the institution in which they are enrolled, and (2) that these students are more likely to leave the educational environment in the absence of such adjustment. Social integrationists, however, view this state of affairs as healthy and necessary, while resistance theorists see it as unreasonable and evidence of cultural hegemony.

The resistance/assimilationist dichotomy that emerges from this debate ignores the possibility of a third position in which institutions create environments where poor, working class and minority students can both develop a critical consciousness and continue with their schooling. This type of institution, described by Giroux, McLaren

and others as embodying a "critical multiculturalist" ideology, helps students avoid choosing between two worlds by valuing and incorporating critical elements of students' home culture and identity into the institution (see Rendon, 1994, 1995 for her work on the pedagogical aspects of such an ideology). While such institutions do not remove entirely the difficulties involved in border crossing, they nevertheless make it possible for students to both affirm their cultural identities while acknowledging their need or desire for formal education.

Mehan et al (1995), in their study of urban public high school students enrolled in a detracking program, has labeled the behavior of high-achieving, non-voluntary minority high school students as "accomodationist," in that they develop strategies to move between their school and non-school cultures. These students "displayed a healthy disrespect for the romantic tenets of achievement ideology and affirmed their cultural identities, while acknowledging the necessity of academic achievement for occupational success" (p. 105). The schools in which these students were enrolled explicitly adopted strategies that encouraged such behavior and beliefs, such as maximizing opportunity for friendship by de-emphasizing competition and emphasizing cooperation and sharing, and by explicitly providing students with the cultural capital that middle class students learn implicitly at home--e.g., how to fill out college applications, take SAT tests, etc. As Mehan et al point out, "circumscribing students' actions as only negative or oppositional produces a limited portrait of their social agency. Having witnessed a wide and diverse range of students' actions, it is clear to us that we need a more subtle and inclusive conception of social agency in order to understand how the inequality between rich and

poor, 'majority' and 'minority' is sustained generation after generation" (p. 95).

When examined within a cultural framework that takes into account individual agency, group membership, and the interplay between these and the institution at-large, college attendance in general and transfer in particular often represents a negotiation of class and cultural boundaries for upwardly mobile poor, working class and ethnic/racial minorities. This paper delves beneath the surface activity of education and employs a cultural perspective that focuses on those elements of institutional life that affect this negotiation process. In doing so, this approach ultimately provides a more nuanced and holistic picture of the transfer process. Moreover, such an approach may suggest ways in which community colleges can enhance, rather than limit, students' formal education.

Research Questions

Given that our study examines urban community colleges that have already achieved high transfer rates, the guiding research questions focus on determining whether, and how, these institutions address the complex class and cultural boundary-crossings that many poor, working class and minority students undergo first as community college students, and later as they attempt to transfer to four-year institutions. In what ways do these students and the institutional culture of these colleges interact to produce a student population that is willing and able to transfer at significantly higher rates than other, similar institutions? To begin to answer this question, we focus on three aspects of institutional culture:

1. Responses and attitudes toward ethnic and racial diversity. Institutions respond to

student diversity along a continuum which ranges from efforts to focus on common values and goals (Ravitch, 1990), to approaching multiculturalism as a subject matter to be learned, and finally toward critical multiculturalism, which attempts to transform educational institutions into a reflection of diverse cultures (Bensimon, 1994). Where an institution falls along this continuum reveals its underlying philosophy about student diversity, and the degree to which it recognizes students' racial, cultural, and class backgrounds as important dimensions of their educational experiences, including transfer.

2. Resolution of disparities between student and institutional cultures. Community colleges embody and attempt to transmit a set of values, beliefs and activities that may reinforce, conflict with or ignore those of various student subcultures. We examine the ways in which disparities between student and institutional culture are addressed to understand whether and how conflict between institutional and student culture are addressed, and how this process might relate to transfer.
3. The relationship of the college to the surrounding community. The degree to which the institution tries to understand the totality of student roles and identities, both within and outside of the college setting, is a critical institutional dimension which may affect student negotiation of class and cultural boundaries. We hypothesize that a college's relationship to the community from which it draws its students reflects the relative importance it places on recognizing students' external lives and identities, and in making connections between them and the educational experience.

Methodology/Description of Study

Eight urban community colleges are being studied in Cultures of Success. Four institutions were studied during the 1994-1995 academic year; another four are being studied during the 1995-1996 academic year. Only the four colleges studied in the first year of data collection--Community College of Philadelphia, Wilbur Wright College in Chicago, Palo Alto College in San Antonio, and Seattle Central Community College--are considered in this paper. The colleges vary along a number of criteria, including size, ethnic/racial mix, percentage of minority faculty members, age and history, structure of the state higher education system, several transfer variables, and curricular structure. A matrix that summarizes these institutions is provided in Table 1.

Data Collection

At each site, a local individual who had been formally trained in ethnographic methods and exhibited familiarity with the research topic was hired to conduct the 9-months of field work in each college. These ethnographers conducted their field work according to general guidelines established by the Project Directors, including a series of interview protocols, but were also free to follow leads peculiar to their own institutions. The research protocol followed a grounded theory format (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), in that research questions evolved and were adjusted according to close analysis of the data. The Project Directors developed the research protocol, monitored and coordinated the field work of the ethnographers, conducted intensive site visits, and are currently analyzing the data.

The ethnographers collected data from many sources and used a variety of techniques, including formal and informal interviews of students, faculty, staff, and administrators; observations of students in both formal (classroom) and informal (e.g., cafeteria, library) settings; observations of faculty in both formal (classroom) and informal (departmental meetings, student advising) settings; and observations of staff and administrators in formal settings (staff meetings). The ethnographers also attended an array of institution-wide events, such as freshman orientation, cultural festivals, and college recruitment events, and collected a wide variety of historical and archival documents, such as student newspapers, course catalogs, mission statements, syllabi, and accreditation reports.

Data Analysis

Over 450 data elements (interviews, observations, and documents) gathered from the four community colleges are being analyzed using Hyperresearch (1991), a content analysis tool for qualitative researchers. After developing a coding scheme designed to address the major research questions of the study, the Project Directors conducted individual and cross-institutional analyses in order to arrive at both an in-depth understanding of each institution and a sense of the ways in which the colleges compare across the three research questions posed above. Data were gathered from college reports and other documents, as well as interviews and observations of students, faculty, staff and administrators; observations were conducted in many situations, including classrooms, student lounges, study areas, cafeterias, faculty meetings, and staff development sessions.

Results

While all four institutions have achieved transfer rates higher than the national norm for urban community colleges, striking differences emerge in their approaches to education in general, and in particular with regard to their approach to the three contextual factors examined in this paper. Yet these institutions cannot be examined in a vacuum, since they have developed in response to, or at least in tandem with, students' culture. Indeed, much of the variance seen among the colleges may be due to differences in students' cultural and class backgrounds, aspirations, and prior educational experiences. Thus, it is necessary to first examine the general characteristics of the students enrolled in these colleges.

While each community college enrolls a sizeable number of racial and ethnic minorities, the ethnic and racial breakdown of each institution varies dramatically (see Table 1). Of the four, only Community College of Philadelphia (CCP) and Palo Alto College (PAC) have majority-minority populations. At CCP, the largest group is African-American (42%); at Palo Alto, the largest group is Mexican American (57%). Wilbur Wright's (WWC) student population is predominantly white, but Hispanics, at 23% of the student population, are the most visible non-Anglo presence on campus. Seattle Central (SCCC) has the largest white population of the four (61%), and has the largest Asian enrollment as well (20%).

The class membership of students enrolled in these institutions, while difficult to assess from the statistical reports of the college, becomes more clear when examining the field notes of our ethnographers. For example, while much of Seattle Central's student

population is poor or working class, a sizeable number of both white and minority students come from middle class backgrounds, in which one or both parents have a college education, and many have advanced degrees. This enrollment pattern may be due to SCCC's strong reputation as an innovative, diverse institution with a strong intellectual emphasis.

While the student body of Wright College contains a mix of working and middle class students, vocational and other non-academic programs are segregated in the school's old building. The newer facility contains the more traditional transfer-oriented programs, such as liberal arts and nursing. As a result, WWC's main campus contains a sizeable portion of students who are decidedly upwardly mobile.

In contrast, the majority of Palo Alto College's (PAC) students appear to be among the first generation in their families to attend college. Many are the sons and daughters of Mexican immigrants. This student body is much less familiar with the college environment in general, and are unsure of their place within it.

As the largest college in our sample, the Community College of Philadelphia (CCP) enrolls over 45,000 students. CCP is the only community college located within the borders of the 6th largest city in the country, and so is the only option for most residents who wish to attend a 2-year college. (The other three community colleges in this study are each part of urban systems which range in size from three to eight 2-year institutions.) Field notes indicate a strong presence of working-class and first-generation college students.

Institutional Cultures: The Negotiation of Class and Cultural Boundaries

The importance attributed by students to the negotiation of class and cultural boundaries varied significantly across colleges. However, within each college, institutional approaches to factors which affect this process--issues of diversity, the disparity between institutional and student cultures, and the college's relationship to the community--complemented student attitudes. Indeed, all four colleges exhibit a congruence between student and institutional responses to these issues. In an effort to paint a more complete picture of each college and the ways in which each of these issues interrelate, the four institutions are discussed separately below. Cross-institutional analysis is conducted in the discussion section of this paper.

A. Wilbur Wright College

Wright College exhibits a comparatively "mainstream" approach to diversity, in which a common culture and heritage are emphasized, and attention paid to issues of diversity occurs in "ghettoized" blocks of time that are devoted to celebrating the achievements of one or another group, such as Hispanics (Hispanic Heritage Month) or Women (Women's History Month). The events that take place during these months include lectures, displays of books written by the group-of-the-month, and musical concerts. However, there is no evidence that the college-wide activities celebrating particular groups seeps into the classroom. In fact, faculty and administrators tend to view the college as a haven in which the messiness of multiculturalism does not intrude. As one faculty member said, WWC "is a refuge from the political chaos." He refers to the political climate of other Chicago community colleges as "jungles" because of all the

warring "factions." Wright, in contrast, runs smoothly because of its strong "sense of community."

The college has adopted a highly individualistic ideology which, when coupled with its strong emphasis on high academic standards, allows it to ignore, or at least downplay, racial and cultural issues. Indeed, several administrators cited the importance of adhering to objective measures of achievement. As one senior administrator stated, "I am rigorous on testing. I have put a lot of students who tested below test grade into a pre-college program...Of course for that I'm a racist." While some faculty members and staff do express sympathy regarding the external demands and pressures placed on students' lives, they, too, see students first and foremost as individuals who are attending WWC to obtain an education. Everything else, including race, class, gender, or cultural differences, is therefore secondary. A counselor at the college describes the link in this way:

> I don't know if students feel they need more. We have a Hispanic month, a black history month, women's month that deals with women in history. We address different backgrounds, but I don't think a big emphasis is placed on that. There's a standard for everyone and everyone needs to look to that standard...It's the notion that everybody is a student or individual here to learn whether they're 30 or 50 or 18 or whatever. The notion that everybody is to be treated in a certain way because this is a college, but not because you're this person or that person.

In strictly academic settings, WWC students have adopted the individualistic, achievement-oriented philosophy of the college. *Within the culture of the classroom*, relations among students tend to downplay the importance of race, and to emphasize student attributes, such as academic seriousness and willingness to work hard. Observations of classroom seating patterns reveal little segregation with regard to race or

ethnicity, and students' comments illustrate an emphasis on common culture that closely reflects that of the faculty and administration. However, in *social settings* such as the cafeteria or student lounges, a different definition of the situation arises. Here, racial and ethnic groups tend to self-segregate, and issues of diversity are more salient. Yet this behavior is not seen as problematic, and is often viewed as helping to maintain racial harmony. This attitude can be seen in the following excerpt from a student interview:

> There's no conflict between races or anything. They just have different cultural backgrounds, so if they understand each other then they're all getting accustomed. Somebody discriminating against race, then there might be some problem, but I very much doubt it in Wright. I've seen fights around, but I've never seen any fights in here....There's more mature people here and less level of crime...They all just like each other.

While race and ethnicity are not ignored by students, within the academic culture of the college, one's performance as a student is ascendant.

WWC's emphasis on developing and maintaining a common culture is also reflected in its stance toward student adjustment to the college environment. No matter one's outside obligations or personal situation, students are expected to toe an academic line drawn by faculty. Within this social integrationist model, accommodation or adjustment to student culture is viewed as detrimental, both to students and to the institution. Again, this ideology is expressed in terms of high standards. One faculty member admonishes her students the first day of class in this way: "You must come to class as often as possible. There will be no make-up work." She goes on to use her own life as an example for her students, explaining to them that it takes her an hour to get to campus, and that this particular morning, she left in the dark. "I have to be here, so I expect you to be here." This type of lecture, which focuses on mechanistic instructions

on how to succeed, was typical in the classrooms visited during the 1994-1995 academic year.

Again, Wright College students do not for the most part resist high faculty expectations, nor do they tend to excuse poor or unsteady academic performance by citing extenuating external circumstances, such as the birth of a child, a full-time job, or family obligations. Instead, these students approach their education in a decidedly pragmatic way. They are unabashedly upwardly mobile, and view education as a tool to get them to where they want to go--"to improve myself by getting a better job," in the words of one student. Students report that other students attending the college "work hard," and there seems to be very little evidence of anti-academic norms, either inside or outside of the classroom. "What's the sense of going to college if you can't handle the work?" one student asks. "Here you're an adult now. You gotta depend on yourself." While groups of socially-oriented students can be found in the student lounge, students studying in the cafeteria or library, either individually or in small groups, are a much more common site. This emphasis on hard work, respect for authority (e.g., faculty), individual responsibility, and vocationalism is typical of the upwardly mobile working class student (Lareau, 1987; Kohn and Schooler, 1983; Katchadourian and Boli, 1985). Thus, students and faculty are in general agreement regarding appropriate student behaviors and attitudes.

In keeping with its adherence to an individualistic ideology, Wright College appears somewhat indifferent to the families and ethnic/racial communities that surround the institution. This relative apathy seems due in part to the college's marked perception of

itself as a "center of excellence" that draws its student body not from the immediate community, but from the entire city and suburbs of Chicago.

When college-community relations are spoken of at all, they are frequently defined quite narrowly as a relationship with the business community, rather than neighborhood groups, churches, or local schools. Two major business organizations and five local chambers of commerce, representing nearly 1,800 businesses are, according to a college catalogue, "committed to the maintenance and creation of new job opportunities by revitalizing and expanding current businesses as well as generating opportunities for new business. Wright has served as an active partner in these efforts." Following is an excerpt from a recent college catalogue which describes its relationship between the growing Hispanic community surrounding the college:

> The growth of this community and our needs assessment activities spurred the development, design and construction of the Humboldt Park Vocational Education Center. Wright has worked carefully with this neighborhood to develop the specific vocational training programs scheduled to open at the Humboldt Park Vocational Education Center; specifically the machinist, machine CNC, licensed practical nursing, and field service technician programs.

In short, the college's work with community residents is designed to develop academic and training programs that reflect the needs of local businesses, rather than those of the community members themselves.

B. Palo Alto College

Like Wright College, Palo Alto College places a strong emphasis on liberal arts and other non-terminal degree programs. But PAC's approach to student success is decidedly more holistic and communal. This institution, which was founded ten years

ago in response to the sustained pressure from a grassroots Hispanic organization to build a college to address the neglected educational needs of the Hispanic community, defines itself by its service to this population. The student body is predominantly Hispanic, and a relatively high 25% of the faculty is as well. Hispanic administrators are also abundant.

PAC exhibits elements of critical multiculturalism, weaving together its commitment to its Hispanic students with its curricular, extra-curricular and pedagogical philosophies. Because the college is so young, many of the founding faculty and administrators are still at the college, and retain their original fervor regarding the college's mission. Anger regarding what they perceive as a pervasive assumption among whites and others that Hispanics do not belong in college pervades many of their comments. One faculty member related the following exchange:

> One day [the man in charge of the evening division] said, "You know, [name], it's too late for these kids. We've just got to acculturate them to college and the next generation will make it." And I looked at him and I said, "you know, my friend, if you weren't black I'd think that was a racist statement. How dare you talk about your kids like that." I don't know if he even realized what he had said, but I hit him smack between the eyes...Collegiality is one thing but we also have to have respect for the people that we're serving--and its' those students in that community.

Faculty and administrators frequently address negative racial and ethnic stereotypes explicitly with their students, both within and outside of the classroom. In fact, an understanding of both cultural heritage and the ways in which this heritage is devalued within the dominant American culture is considered a critical part of the educational process at Palo Alto. "You have to know who you are and feel comfortable with that before you can truly move on to do other types of things. I truly believe that you have

to look at your background...and have an understanding of what you want to do in the long run," said one long-time administrator. Another speaks of nourishing a critical consciousness among his students that allows them to understand social inequity and use this knowledge to their advantage. He states: "It is very important to promote an awareness of their culture among students. This gives a better understanding of who they are and how they are related to the bigger picture and how they could use this knowledge to help them succeed."

These statements illustrate a recognition of dual identities which is common among faculty and administrators at PAC. The institution's desire not to force students to choose between the two cultures is illustrated in other ways as well. A number of faculty and administrators make a conscious effort to speak Tex-Mex (a mix of English and Spanish) and Spanish to students, support staff and others working at the college from the Hispanic community. They employ this strategy both to make themselves more accessible, and to affirm the place of Spanish (and Hispanic culture) within the college setting. "Los Mexicanos responded to me, and it make them feel more comfortable. I realized that it is something that you shouldn't be ashamed of. I tell students que me hablen en espanol (to speak to me in Spanish) if they don't feel comfortable in English," relates one administrator who used to be on faculty. Such proactive attempts to legitimize Hispanic culture are pervasive at PAC, and serve to offset negative or racist attitudes that are infrequently displayed by other employees of the college.

Students seem to appreciate and support these efforts to incorporate Hispanic culture into the college. In fact, Hispanic students view the struggles of Hispanic faculty

and administration as akin to their own, and actively support their efforts. One administrator, who speaks of his own frustration with non-Hispanics who cannot or will not pronounce his name correctly, reports that work-study students in his office notice and support his insistence on correct pronunciation. "They tell me, 'Alright sir. You tell them. Set them straight.' I've even noticed when they answer the phone and someone asks for [Anglicized name] they tell them, 'His name is [Hispanic name].'"

PAC's commitment to and affirmation of Hispanic culture can also be seen in its relationship with the community at large. Palo Alto's official slogan--"El Carazon de la Communidad" (The Heart of the Community)--is taken quite seriously, and this dedication can be seen in the variety of events, both cultural and educational, that are sponsored by the college specifically for the benefit of the community. These events, such as high blood pressure screenings, tax preparation workshops, and cultural festivals, are used to help community members, many of whom are the family and friends of PAC students, feel comfortable in a college setting. For example, PAChanga, the college's traditional Mexican festival, is designed to establish a cultural connection between the school and community members. As one staff member who is involved in planning PAChanga says:

> I want them to feel comfortable with bringing their abuelita (grandmother) to school even though she may not speak any English. Or for some students who say, "My dad trabaja levantando basura (works as a garbage man)". Well that's ok, that doesn't matter. I want them to feel comfortable with their family background and culture and not feel ashamed.

In this way, Palo Alto College intentionally and consistently attempts to blur the line between family, community and school, thereby reducing the discomfort that students

may feel when they cross this border.

Clearly, the college is imbued with a sense of responsibility regarding student comfort, and it has a long tradition of adapting to the academic and cultural needs of its students. Historically, the institution developed in response to the needs of the southside community, and the administrative and curricular structure developed to some degree in direct response to student needs. As one historian of the college explains, "We didn't create a structure and then say okay what we're going to do is fit the students into this structure that was created...we let the students develop the structure." This faith in students and their ability to know what is best for them is also seen in the college's resistance to external pressure to create a largely vocational institution. "We didn't want it to be another vocational school," stated one faculty member. "We want to give these kids a chance to make a decision for themselves. If you lock it into vocational, that's it, you've made a decision for them. If they want to go vocational, they have every right and should have access to those kinds of programs, but don't create something like that and say this is where you belong."

C. Seattle Central Community College

Diversity in all of its manifestations is seen by Seattle Central as its defining characteristic. Repeatedly, students, faculty, and administrators speak of the positive role that diversity plays in all aspects of Seattle Central life, both inside and outside of the classroom. The primacy of diversity, and the importance of tolerance and acceptance, is reflected at all levels of the institution, from its formal mission statement ("SCCC will

promote the awareness, understanding and cooperation made available by the rich mix of cultures, races, ages and lifestyles within our student body") to the comments and behavior of faculty, students, and administrators. As a faculty member points out, this extreme emphasis on diversity has a somewhat ironic effect on the overall tone of the college: "There is no dominant group, no sense of whose culture has primacy. Stability comes from this distribution of power. In some ways SCCC demythologizes the importance of ethnic identity."

While the college is predominantly white in its student, administrative and faculty bodies, it both attracts and recruits individuals of all races, ethnicities, and sexual orientations who prefer diverse communities. Students in Seattle can choose from among three different community colleges located in the city, and students attending SCCC frequently report that they chose the college specifically because of its emphasis on diversity. Many of these students consider themselves intellectuals or artists, and come from the middle class backgrounds which support these pursuits. They are actively seeking out ways to broaden their experiences. "I like not being with all the same kinds of people. I didn't want to go to [another community college] because all of them are white. I didn't want to go off with my high school," reports one white student. Another says that diversity "provides you with the foundation from which you can explore whatever. You have to understand the complexities of social issues to be able to decide what you want to study."

A multiculturalist ideology is seen as at least as important as actual racial or ethnic diversity itself in the hiring practices of the college. Experience and degree of comfort

with diversity is an explicit criteria for hiring at the college, as is recruitment of faculty and staff of color. One administrator contrasts the evolution of the college's commitment to diversity with other, more superficial shows of support by saying "I remember in the 70's when we would have ethnic day and we'd wear our clothes and dance and all that kind of stuff, but not anymore. I don't hire anybody unless I know something about their background in dealing with differences demonstrated." Job announcements, even for secretarial jobs, explicitly require an ability to work in a multicultural environment.

An emphasis on critical multiculturalism pervades the classroom as well. Feminist, Afro-centric and other "radical" political ideologies are reflected in the teaching and curriculum, and students are actively encouraged to wrestle with the implications of class, racial, or gender oppression in their own lives and in their education. Courses taught within the interdisciplinary Coordinated Studies Program (CSP) seem to be particularly attuned to diversity issues. Yet whereas students will often debate these issues with some fervor within the classroom, the emphasis here, as it is elsewhere at the college, is on acceptance rather than continued conflict. Differences between groups are acknowledged and accepted, but overidentification with "victim" or "oppressor" status is not. This distinction is made by one student who describes her experience in one of the CSP classes: "It was like, oh boy. More women, more feminist stuff, more guy bashing. And I was like, this isn't like that at all. This is really cool, learning about all the efforts of women." Another student articulates this viewpoint by saying

> I think racism is based on group dynamics and that we all just have different pigments in our skin...If you're with a Vietnamese person you can really learn to

> respect this person. And I think that's a lesson that we need to learn: that we can respect other cultures and other groups of people...I think we as intelligent people need to connect with everyone that we can on a happy and friendly level and not assume anything about anyone at any time.

The absence of student self-segregation in both within and out of class settings helps confirm how deeply this philosophy is held by the student body.

At Seattle Central, validation of student identity--whether it be defined by race, culture, gender, or sexual orientation--is a central concern for faculty and administrators. "We've made it a practice to value the students and use their different backgrounds; to use their difference," says one professor. Faculty members' behavior is characterized by a consistent sharing of aspects of their personal lives and their political ideologies, and this practice is designed to reduce the distance between them and their students. Personal stories are woven throughout the classroom discourse, and students are encouraged to apply and compare their own experience to the information being relayed in books.

This respect for student experience and needs is displayed at the administrative level as well. Instructional Council Meetings are marked by discussions regarding the college's responsibility to adjust to its ever-changing student body, and while there is some resistance to this philosophy, it is clearly the predominant one. For example, one faculty member suggests that the college must become more sensitive to class issues, stating that "Reducing the fear factor is important for working class people. Tell them that they don't have to come on campus if they feel uncomfortable; they can do distance learning or correspondence courses." A high level administrator stated, "We are in the business of saving lives here...We all need to find new ways to teach new students." Clearly, the

responsibility for student success is viewed as resting squarely on the shoulders of the college. Students, by simply enrolling in SCCC and attending class, have already fulfilled their part of the educational "bargain."

Seattle Central is seen as an extension of the community in which it is housed, which is an extremely diverse, densely populated environment full of thriving storefronts, restaurants and clubs. Students, faculty and administrators consistently mention the permeability between the school and the community, and they move effortlessly between the two worlds. "The people that you see in the bars and clubs are SCCC people," says one student, and the frequency with which faculty and administrators report patronizing restaurants and clubs in the area support this assertion.

D. Community College of Philadelphia

As by far the largest community college included in our sample (over 45,000 students), the Community College of Philadelphia is perhaps the most difficult to characterize in a general sense. Indeed, its size and the diversity of experience it offers to students is a defining characteristic of the college, and helps to explain the multiple patterns of interaction between students and institution that are revealed in the data. The college's decentralized administrative structure, the strength of the faculty, and a maximum class size of 36 have allowed a multitude of relatively small "pockets of connection" (described below) to emerge that allow students and faculty to interact in an educationally meaningful and sustained manner. Hence, despite its size, most students perceive CCP as a comparatively small, even intimate place, describing it as "much

smaller than a big university" and saying that "at other schools, classes are like a stadium. You need binoculars to see your teachers."

Racial and cultural diversity is not ignored at CCP; but neither is it given much sustained attention by either students or the administration. The diversity of the student body is acknowledged in a generally positive way by most who were queried about it directly. Students consistently report a lack of racial or ethnic tension among themselves, and seating patterns within the classroom tend not to be segregated. As one student said, "So many different types of people. Some of everybody and we're all in here together. I think it's beautiful....Black, white--trying to get an education." A two-hour "riot" that occurred in 1993 between Asians and Blacks in the cafeteria is considered an anomaly, since for the most part, different races and cultures have little contact with each other outside of the classroom, and tend to co-exist peacefully. The inherent contradiction displayed between the behavior and attitudes of students regarding diversity is summarized quite nicely by one student, who described CCP as "a big melting pot of oil and water."

Yet when classroom and curricular issues are discussed, race seems to be a much hotter flashpoint. Students express consistent frustration with having to enroll in non-credit courses, and several students voiced a suspicion that mandatory placement testing and multiple levels of remedial programs serve to segregate blacks from whites. "Students have to take too many classes before getting into your program. It takes too long and more whites than blacks get in," complained one student. Others associate particular academic programs with a racial or ethnic group ("You should visit English,

math or the sciences. You're gonna see a lot of white people.") High status programs in particular are subject to such charges, as is the existence of a satellite campus located in a predominantly white area of the city. While many students of all types report feeling perfectly comfortable at CCP, nearly as many imply or suggest that their experience has been marred by minor or major bouts with discriminatory attitudes or policies within the classroom.

The faculty at CCP is highly politicized around issues of diversity and multiculturalism, although some are more willing than others to speak about these issues directly. The college's rather mature and stable faculty is dominated by older whites who have been affiliated with the college for over 30 years, during which time the demographics of the student population has changed dramatically. While a few faculty speak directly about the increase in African-American students, others are more oblique, a tendency which is pointed out by this staff member: "You will always hear 'lower standards' when institutions become predominantly minority. Look at the 1967 and '68 yearbooks. That'll give you a snapshot of students that no one will put into words."

A curricular war of sorts is currently being waged between the "multiculturalists," who reside primarily in the general education program (particularly the English department), and the "traditionalists", who tend to be more senior and/or associated with the programs specifically designed to transfer high numbers of students. While the multiculturalists and some programs designed specifically for high risk students tend to utilize non-canon texts and encourage students to value and rely on their own experiences, this type of pedagogy does not seem to be widespread at CCP. For the

most part, the college's approach to cultural diversity is rather mainstream. Even some of the faculty considered most "radical" do not encourage students to address their personal experiences in the classroom. As one said, "They already know about that stuff--that they were abused as a kid, or they grew up in a ghetto. I want them to learn about stuff that they haven't learned before--stuff that the middle class knows." While his commitment to empowering students is real, his pedagogy reflects the "cultural competency" approach advocated by such conservative voices as E.D. Hirsch (**date**).

Not surprisingly, CCP does not exhibit a consistent approach to resolving disparities between student and academic culture which, given the predominance of working-class students of all races, is significant. Again, the debate seems to be centered on the role of remedial classes in the college curriculum, and is posed as a perpetual conflict between "access" and "standards". Some faculty and administrators view these classes as a response to the increasingly "underpreparedness" of the student body, and express dismay at the preponderance of these classes,, saying that it serves to "cool out" students by reducing their expectations. Others believe that the courses perform a critical function in that they require students to build the prerequisite skills necessary before entering credit courses, and also give students time to become socialized to the college environment. "You have to explain to students that they're changing cultures," said one faculty member. "We're a bureaucracy in an ever-changing bureaucracy." At a deeper level, the debate concerns whether the college is responsible for adapting to the student, or simply transforming the student into someone who fits better into the college environment.

The combination of developmental courses and a network of both formal and informal support services suggests that the college is attempting to resolve this debate by combining high standards with a supportive environment. While not systemic, pockets of active support seem to exist in abundance throughout the college. In addition to tutoring services and an array of special programs designed to help students in academic trouble, examples of deep dedication to students can be seen throughout the faculty. In fact, an appreciation of the competing obligations and needs of the students can be seen in multiple instances of proactive adjustment to the realities of students' lives, such as granting permission to bring babies to class, allowing students to sleep in offices, and even paying portions of students' tuition or purchasing their books. Such support tends to occur in the more close-knit departments, such as professional programs, some science departments, and others that require faculty and students to spend extended periods of time together, creating a learning community of sorts. Much like the pockets of connection that occur in the more purely academic aspects of the college, these pockets of student support are the result of a hands-off administrative policy that allows them to emerge and flourish.

Students themselves consistently report difficulty in adjusting to college life, but can list an abundance of both formal and informal support for academic and social concerns. However, they are equally insistent that such services must, and should, be sought out by students themselves. While students report feeling "lucky" or "blessed" when they find themselves in a supportive environment, they do not display a sense of entitlement to such arrangements. Instead, the prevailing student ideology among students is rather

individualistic. One student describes this philosophy of individual responsibility in this way:

> I think the college does do something for the needs of students, but I think that part of the process is that the student also has a part to play and that the student has to figure out how to manage his freedom and how to use the programs.

Another points to what he sees as the predominantly laissez fare attitude of faculty by saying

> Here in the regular classes, it's the class vs. the teacher. You get the ground rules straight and you bend them as much as possible. But what's very interesting is that the teachers are on one side of the border and the students are on the other. The teacher very rarely tries to push the students into following his agenda. It's basically like, here's what I demand of you, if you want to get an A, you study. I'm not going to be your mother.

The student does not necessarily disapprove of this situation. Rather, students' attempts to bend the rather inflexible rules laid down by faculty is seen as the normal course of events within the context of the college.

CCP is not located within one community, but instead is adjacent to an array of neighborhoods, each of which is distinct in terms of class, race and ethnicity. Perhaps because of this diversity of communities, the college has not developed particularly strong relationships with any of them. Clearly, faculty and staff perceive the institution as fulfilling a vital service for the community, but its service to the community is confined to providing an affordable, quality education. Again, individual pockets of community involvement exist among the faculty and some academic programs and student clubs, but this involvement is not systemic. All those entering the college must present an

identification badge or provide other evidence of clearance, a fact which further reduces the permeability between CCP and the city.

Discussion

While all four of the colleges described above are quite successful in transferring students, aspects of their institutional tone and mission reveal distinctly different conceptualizations of the college experience. Institutional approaches to the three elements of culture focused on in this paper--diversity, disparity between institutional and student culture, and relationship with the community--tend to be related empirically, as indeed they are conceptually: a critical multiculturalist ideology, for example, would produce policies and attitudes that are student-centered, and would embrace the community from which students come as well. Yet in addition, institutional culture tends to be roughly analogous to student culture as well. In fact, little evidence of student resistance to either individual faculty members or to the institutional culture as a whole has emerged at any of the colleges. The "oppositional cultures" that are seen in other ethnographic studies of community college do not seem present, despite our best efforts to uncover such cultures. This relative lack of conflict between student and institutional cultures, despite how disparate they may seem on the surface, suggests that the degree of "fit" between the two may be a critical component of an urban community college's ability to successfully transfer large numbers of its diverse student population.

Wright College and the Community College of Philadelphia display the most traditional approaches to issues of diversity. These institutions do not in any way appear to be hostile to nontraditional students, and in fact strive to be open and welcoming to

all types of students. However, diversity is generally addressed in a rather compartmentalized manner, and is regarded more as a subject matter to be learned, rather than as an intrinsic part of student identity that permeates the college experience. The relative weakness of each college's ties to the surrounding community is further evidence of an individualistic ideology that downplays or even ignores students' multiple identities. While pockets of CCP faculty have been successful in inserting a multiculturalism requirement into the formal structure of the curriculum, the degree to which a generally resistant faculty will address such concerns in their classroom remains to be seen.

Wright students are more predominantly white and appear to come from a somewhat higher class strata than do the students at CCP, who are mostly poor and working class. However, students at both colleges are not politicized regarding diversity issues, and while students tend to congregate in race-specific groups socially, little conflict between the races is seen at either college. In both the student and institutional cultures, diversity is a recognized but not central component.

In contrast, both Palo Alto College and Seattle Central Community College display some aspects of critical multiculturalism, albeit with markedly different goals. PAC employs a multi-pronged, multi-level strategy to create a critical consciousness among its heavily Hispanic student body regarding the role of race and ethnicity in their lives. Both inside and outside of the classroom, attempts are made by significant portions of the faculty and administration of the college to affirm the value of Hispanic culture, and to show students how to navigate between it and the more mainstream, middle class

values of the academy. The extensive outreach to the Hispanic community is evidence of this philosophy. That white culture is dominant in American society is a given, and the institution positions itself as somewhat oppositional to that culture in that it insists that its Hispanic students retain their ethnic pride. In short, it creates an environment in which students can adopt accomodationists attitudes and behaviors. Palo Alto students, unfamiliar with the college environment and still closely connected to their Hispanic heritage, embrace this philosophy and actively use it to help them achieve their educational goals.

Yet whereas Palo Alto College's approach to diversity is bi-polar (Hispanics in relation to the dominant white society), Seattle Central is more purely multicultural, in that all racial and cultural groups, including whites, are given "equal time". None is allowed to dominate the landscape of the college. Issues regarding all kinds of diversity permeate the discussions of students and faculty, who seem to be in agreement that understanding and affirming radically different cultures is of preeminent importance in the educational enterprise. The elements of struggle and conflict that are inherent in PAC's portrayal of White/Hispanic relationships can also be seen in classrooms at SCCC. However ultimately, the goal is acceptance at SCCC. Whereas SCCC's ideology suggests that such struggles can be overcome in favor of a more cooperative existence, PAC's ideology suggests that, at least for now, the struggle continues.

The two institutions that display more holistic approaches to diversity also tend to be similar in their approaches to resolving inconsistencies between institutional and student culture. Seattle Central and Palo Alto are "student centered" in both their rhetoric and

their actions, and consistently attempt to adjust and re-adjust their institutions to address the needs of students. Neither institution views such adjustment as a "reduction of standards" or catering to the whims of the students. Rather, such flexibility is seen as an intrinsic part of a quality education, and as such, appears to be a central part of their missions. The student populations of these institutions, while vastly different in terms of class and ethnic/racial makeup, both report seeking out their respective colleges in part because of this flexibility. Seattle Central's students, many more of whom have a college-going tradition in their families, are the more proactive and savvy of the two groups, and report entering the college with a firm sense of their identity and an insistence on its centrality in their educational experience. Palo Alto's students may not enter the college quite so politicized, but they readily embrace the unfamiliar yet welcome focus on their needs and aspirations.

Wright College's approach to providing a quality education does not include such flexibility. In fact, faculty and administrators consistently equate inflexibility with high standards and quality education. This approach to education is based on an individualistic and rather mechanistic ideology, in which education is what happens in the classroom only, and the college is viewed as a level playing field in which all students are allotted an equal chance at success. To adjust to students' needs or sensibilities would be to open a pandora's box of endless exceptions and special cases, and would result in a lowering of standards that would be a disservice to students. Students, too, embrace this ideology. Fiercely upwardly mobile, their achievement orientation predisposes them to adapt to the dominant culture of the college, since they believe that success in this arena

will ultimately lead to the economic stability they desire.

CCP appears to occupy a middle ground between Wright College and SCCC/PAC. The college sees itself as embodying a very traditional academic model, in which high standards are insured by rigorous placement exams and multiple levels of developmental courses. Yet CCP also seems to provide a greater array of academic services than does Wright, and has as well pockets of faculty and administration who, individually and within small programs, acknowledge the disparity between student and academic culture and attempt to address it in various ways. Both white and minority students at the college report significant difficulty in adjusting to college life, but display attitudes that embrace elements of an individualistic ideology. Services are available for those who need them and students are generally supportive of each other in the classroom setting as well as in the more cohesive academic programs at the college, but the general student body does not expect such support to be a central part of their college experience.

Conclusion

The four community colleges examined in this paper share several characteristics: they are urban, enroll high numbers of minority students, and have transfer rates that are significantly higher than the national average for urban institutions. Such community colleges are rare, a fact that suggests that these institutions are qualitatively different.

The consistently high transfer rates of these colleges suggest that they are not producing the "cooling out" effect that community colleges in general have been accused

of. For a large proportion of their student body, these institutions are at the very least removing roadblocks to successful transfer, and in some instances adopting policies that actively encourage such advancement. Rather than resisting academic culture, many students enrolled in these colleges are using it to achieve their goals. Oppositional student cultures are not the norm at these colleges.

Yet a single, consistent pattern of interaction between institutional and student cultures did not emerge from our analyses. Quite to the contrary, our individual portraits of the colleges reveal distinctly different institutions, with widely divergent histories, curricula, and educational philosophies. A comparative analysis reveals that two institutions have adopted more mainstream approaches to education, while the other two embody some elements of critical multiculturalism. Yet students' approaches to education differ as well: while students at some institutions assimilate into the dominant academic culture, those at others adopt a more accomodationist approach that allows them to use education while maintaining connection with their own culture.

Indeed, if these colleges are similar on any dimension aside from the most superficial, it is that their institutional cultures seem to mesh with the unique attitudes, needs, and aspirations of their student bodies. The ways in which this confluence occurs is, we suspect, situation-specific: the critical multicultural approach to education adopted by Palo Alto College would not work at Wright, and neither would CCP's mainstream approach to diversity be accepted by students at Seattle Central. Whether students willingly adapt to the institutional culture or the culture adapts to the student, the ability of either culture to be adaptive appears to be a key ingredient in the culture of these

colleges, and may well contribute to students' ability and willingness to negotiate the class and cultural boundaries inherent in college attendance and the transfer process.

MATRIX OF FOUR COMMUNITY COLLEGES

DIMENSIONS	**Philadelphia**	**Seattle Central**	**Wilbur Wright**	**Palo Alto**
Transfer Rate	48%	34%	28%	65-70% who take transfer program
Size	19,600	9600	6500	6600
Ethnic/Racial Mix	42% African-American 5% Hispanic 6% Asian	13% African-American 6% Hispanic 20% Asian	12% African-American 23% Hispanic 11% Asian	6% African American 57% Hispanic 1% Asian
% Minority Faculty Members	about 15%	27% total (27 of 91 academic faculty; 10 of 48 vocational)	about 10% (hiring freeze of 15 years recently lifted)	Full-time: 28% minority Part-time: 25% Overall: 25% 6 AA; remainder Hispanic
Age and History	About 30 years old. Long tradition of functioning as transfer institution. Still deeply committed; emphasis on academic, rather than vocational or technical courses. New president will be inaugurated in March (Frederick Capshaw from Minnesota).	27 years old. There were only two junior colleges in state until 1967, when the Community College Act was passed. Mission of institution has always been comprehensive/technical. Physical location built around a former technical school.	60 years old; originally founded as a junior college; recent acquisition of additional functions (e.g., remedial) difficult adjustment for some faculty. Transfer still described as primary, but other functions are growing and competing for money and resources.	9 years old. Founded in response to grass-roots organizing by Hispanic community because there wasn't an institution in SW San Antonio serving them. Combination of rural and urban. Located on outskirts of city, it's chief feeder school is urban. Lot of students from outlying areas.

DIMENSIONS	Philadelphia	Seattle Central	Wilbur Wright	Palo Alto
Structure of State Higher Education System	Community colleges are not part of an integrated state system. There are no community college districts. CCs currently have large degree of autonomy, but autonomy may lessen as states are expected to pick up larger proportion of funding in the future (current configuration is .33 each from state, students, and local sponsor).	Washington's community colleges have a separate board and budget. There are 32 community college districts, and all but two have one institution each. Seattle Central's district has two additional ccs. The technical colleges were part of the public school system until two years ago.	Community colleges are a separate sector, with the Illinois Community College Board reporting to the Illinois Board of Higher Education. There is some movement to make ICCB equivalent to the State Board. State has community college districts, of which Chicago is one.	HE Coordinating Board appt by governor. Board hires Commissioner. Community & Tech Colleges fall under an asst commissioner. 49 community college districts, 64 campuses. Alamo CC District governed by Board of Trustees who hire chancellor, to whom institutional presidents report.
Transfer Articulation Agreements	Individually negotiated articulation agreements with most area colleges and universities have existed for some time. VPAA working hard to further specify agreements to insure that students transfer as juniors. Agreements developed individually with each institution.	There is a voluntary, statewide body that has developed transfer agreements. Deal is that if anyone is accepted into a state institution with an AA from a community college, that person has junior standing. Big hurdle is getting accepted.	State has mandated that students with Associate's degrees who have fulfilled general education requirements must transfer as juniors to all state institutions except UI Urbana and UI Chicago Circle.	Legislature is mandating more written articulation agreements (HS, CC and 4 year institutions), especially for general education courses; also mandated are common course numbers.

DIMENSIONS	**Philadelphia**	**Seattle Central**	**Wilbur Wright**	**Palo Alto**
Institutionalization of Transfer Function	Transfer center exists, but performs counseling function only. Counselor works closely with Office of Academic Affairs.	Fully developed Transfer Center.	No transfer center. Transfer mission is shared broadly by faculty and administrators.	Transfer Center partially funded by HACU. Extension of Counseling Center.
Curricular Structure	Institution has been redesigning curriculum around areas of competencies/dimensions. Dimension committees have just submitted their criteria; faculty must develop syllabi that encompass these dimension by end of Spring Semester 1994.	Lots of collaborative learning and learning communities.	Described as "very basic general education." Innovation occurs around scheduling (e.g., flexible night and weekend courses)	Since it opened it has been more like a Junior College, with emphasis on transfer, but is being pressured by state to become more comprehensive. Not particularly innovative, though a Center for Teaching and Learning is being planned. Emphasis on Liberal Studies.

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